

Integrating summaries, paraphrases, and quotes into your writing is an integral skill when writing academic papers. It is a skill that requires time and practice to develop. This guide will assist you in building your skills,



Use the QR code to make an appointment with the Writing Center for additional help.

Overview:

Method	What is Does	Length	Voice
Summary	Condenses main ideas	Much shorter than original	Mostly Yours
Paraphrase	Restates a specific idea	About the same length as original	Yours
Quotation	Uses the author's EXACT words	Matches original exactly; standard quote should be brief (1-3 sentences)	Author's

Summarizing

A **summary** gives the big ideas of a source in a much shorter form.

When to Use It

- ✓ You want to give background or context
- ✓ The details aren't as important as the overall point
- ✓ You're introducing a source

Common Mistakes

- ✗ Including too many details
- ✗ Copying phrases from the original
- ✗ Forgetting to cite

How to Do It (Step-by-Step)

1. Read the entire section or article
2. Ask: *What is the author's main point?*
3. Write it **from memory**, not while looking at the text
4. Check for accuracy
5. Cite the source

Paraphrasing

A **paraphrase** restates a specific idea from a source in your own words and sentence structure.

When to Use It

- ✓ You want to focus on a specific point or piece of evidence
- ✓ The idea matters, but the wording does not
- ✓ You want to maintain your own voice

How to Do It

1. Change both word choice and sentence structure
2. Keep the original meaning
3. Keep it about the same length as the original
4. Always cite

Paraphrase vs. Patchwriting

- ✗ Patchwriting = swapping a few words but keeping the structure
- ✓ A real paraphrase shows you understand the idea and can explain it yourself

Example

Original:

Regular feedback helps students improve their writing skills over time.

Paraphrase:

When students receive ongoing feedback, their writing tends to improve as they revise and practice (Jones, 2022).

**Note, the citation here is an example of an APA in-text citation.*

Quotations

A **quotation** uses the author's exact words, placed inside quotation marks.

When to Use It

- ✓ The wording is especially powerful or precise
- ✓ The author is an expert you want to highlight
- ✓ You're analyzing language or tone

Best Practices

- Keep quotes **short and purposeful**
- Introduce the quote
- Explain or analyze it afterward
- Cite correctly

Mistakes to Avoid

- ✗ Dropping quotes into your paper without explanation
- ✗ Overusing quotes instead of paraphrasing

Example

According to Smith (2023), "time management is one of the most significant challenges facing college students today" (p. 45).

**Note, the citation here is an example of an APA in-text citation.*

⚠ Avoiding Plagiarism ⚠

You may be plagiarizing if you:

- Copy exact wording without quotation marks
- Keep the sentence structure of the original
- Forget to cite your source

Rule of thumb: If the idea came from somewhere else, you need a citation.